Comments on Docket ID: USCG-2016-0132; Anchorage Grounds: Hudson River, NY

US Coast Guard:

The Palisades Interstate Park Commission (Commission) has serious concerns regarding the potential impact of the proposed new and expanded anchorages at the Tompkins Cove, Montrose Point, Yonkers Extension and potentially the Newburgh Anchorage Grounds in the Hudson River.

These sites are immediately adjacent to several historic sites the Commission owns that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These sites include the Stony Point Battlefield and Stony Point Lighthouse in Stony Point, Washington’s Headquarters in Newburg and the Palisades Cliffs in New Jersey located across the Hudson River from Yonkers. It is important to note that the Palisades Cliffs, located in Bergen and Rockland Counties, are also federally listed as the Palisades of the Hudson National Natural Landmark (NNL) and the Palisades Interstate Park National Historic Landmark (NHL). The NHL and NNL designations are a rare dual distinction. The site protects Triassic period cliff formations along the west side of the Hudson River and is a nationally significant geological and scenic feature that has been protected through precedent-setting conservation efforts for over 100 years.

In addition to the historic preservation aspect of these properties, the Commission also serves recreational boating activities on the Hudson, particularly in the Yonkers area that will be negatively impacted by these anchorages.

These new and expanded anchorages will create a significant negative impact on the scenic view shed and recreational use of these nationally designated resources. Because of the potential number and size of vessels involved, these impacts will occur during both the day and nighttime hours which will include the associated noise and nighttime light pollution, along with an increased risk of spills in close proximity to these federally listed resources.

The Palisades Interstate Park Commission was Congressionally approved through a 1937 Interstate Compact. One of the primary purposes established in the Compact was for the Commission to provide “faithful co-operation in the future planning, improvement, development, maintenance, government and management of the park, holding in high trust for the benefit of the public the special blessings and natural advantages thereof”.

We believe these anchorages will negatively impact that primary aspect or our mission to protect the resources we hold in public trust.

Sincerely,

James Hall